(v) Export of 10 lakh tonnes of sugar has been permitted in the licensing year 2000-2001 (April-March). In order to boost the export of sugar, Government has taken the following measures:-

—Sugar meant for export has been exempted from levy obligation. This exemption, which was initially available for a period of six months commenceing from 1st June, 2000, has been extended upto 31st March, 2001.

—The quantity exported for commercial exports is bieng treated as advance freesale release to be adjusted after a peirod of 12 months from the date of release.

—The levy exmption on the quantity of sugar meant for commercial exports, if it cannot be availed by the sugar factory out of 1999-2000 season's production due to the completion of its levy obligation, may be availed by the concerned sugar factory from the production in the ensuing sugar season.

—DEPB at the rate of 5% of the F.O.B. value of exports of sugar has been allowed.

(vi) Government has decided to introduce futures/forward market in sugar.

(d) and (e) Government has taken decision on all the recommendations of the Mahajan Committee. 75 recommendations made by the Committee have been accepted wholly or partly or with modifications. Many of these recommendations have already been implementted, either fully or partly. The remaining recommendations accepted by Government are at various stages of implementation.

Boost for Sugar Sector

*398. SHRI K. KALAVENKATA RAO:
SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether agriculturists called for some booster shots in the sugar sector;

(b) if so, the action taken thereon; and

(c) the action proposed to boost sugar exports especially to Iraq to barter oil for food?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHANTA KUMAR): (a) and (b) Suggestions have been received from various quarters for improving the viability of the sugar industry.

Government has taken the following steps to improve the financial health of the sugar industry:—

(i) Levy obligation of sugar mills, which was reduced from 40% to 30% w.e.f. 1.1.2000, has been further reduced to 15% w.e.f. 1.2.2001.

(ii) Customs duty on imported sugar has been increased to 60% w.e.f. 9.2.2000, alongwith continuance of the countervailing duty of Rs. 850 per tonne, so as to restrict the inflow of sugar into the country from abroad.

(iii) Monthly releases of freesale sugar are being made judiciously to ensure fair realization to sugar industry.

(iv) Advanced releases of freesale sugar are being given to needy sugar mills to enable them to clear cane price dues of the farmers.

(v) Export of 10 lakh tonnes of sugar has been permitted in the licensing year 2000-2001 (April-March).

(vi) Government has decided to introduce futures/forward market in sugar.

(c) In order to boost the export of sugar, Government has taken the following measures:-

—Sugar meant for export has been exempted from levy obligation. This exemption, which was initially available for a period of six months commencing from 1st June, 2000, has been extended upto 31st March, 2001.

—The quantity exported for commercial exports is being treated

as advance freesale released to be adjusted after a period of 12 months from the date of release.

—The levy exemption on the quantity of sugar meant for commercial exports, if it cannot be availed by the sugar factory out of 1999-2000 season's production due to the completion of its levy obligation, may be availed by the concerned sugar factory from the production in the ensuing sugar season.

—DEPB at the rate of 5% of the F.O.B. value of exports of sugar has been allowed.

All exports, including sugar exports, to Iraq are permissible under the U.N. sponsored 'Oil for Food' programme. Contracts for supplies are awarded as per prescribed tendering process. It is not on barter basis for oil but payments to exporters are made through a specially U.N. maintained "Escrow Iraq Account".

Extradition Treaties

*399. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the countries with whom India has signed extradition treaties;

(b) how far the signing of the extradition treaties with other countries has helped India; and

(c) the names of countries with whom India has proposed to sign such treaties?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) India has signed extradition treaties with the following 14 countries so far:

Belgium, Bhutan, Canada, Hong Kong, Mongolia, Nepal, Netherlands, Russian Federation, Switzerland, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States of America and Uzbekistan.

(b) Extradition treaties provide a legal framework for seeking extradition of fugitive criminals. They have proved to be useful. India